

Food and Nutrition Services Makes North Carolina Stronger

What is Food and Nutrition Services?

Food & Nutrition Services (FNS) is a federal food assistance program that helps low-income families buy nutritious food. In North Carolina, monthly FNS benefits are issued via “Electronic Benefits Transfer” (EBT) card. The EBT card is used to buy food at most grocery stores and some farmers’ markets. The EBT card is like a credit or debit card; and like these cards it is swiped at the store’s checkout. FNS benefits are issued on the EBT card on a specific date of each month; according to the individual’s last digit of their Social Security Number (SSN).

Can I get Food and Nutrition Services?

To get FNS benefits, your income has to be under certain limits.

• **Income:**

You *may* be eligible for Food and Nutrition Services if your total income falls below the appropriate gross income limits for your household size. Please be aware that the eligibility workers at your local agency determine which income limit applies to your household and have many other factors to consider in determining your household’s eligibility.

"Household" size refers to the number in the household who may be eligible for FNS. Individuals who receive SSI, WFFA, or the household contains an aged or disabled individual may have different eligibility requirements. Look at the table below to see the most you can get if you have no income. As your income goes up, your FNS benefits go down. The amounts in this table may change each October. To see if they have changed, call EBT Call Center 1-888-622-7328.

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People in Household	200% Gross Income Limit	130% Gross Income Limit	Net Monthly Income Limit
1	\$2,082	\$1,354	\$1,041
2	\$2,820	\$1,832	\$1,410
3	\$ 3,556	\$2,311	\$1,778
4	\$4,292	\$2,790	\$2,146
5	\$5,030	\$3,269	\$2,515
6	\$5,766	\$3,748	\$2,883
7	\$6,502	\$4,227	\$3,251

• **Resources:** North Carolina no longer uses a resource limit test for most households. A FNS caseworker will tell you if your household has to meet a resource limit. You may be able to get FNS benefits even if you own a home, car, land, property, or have a retirement plan or money in the bank.

Resources that don’t count are your home, land, buildings, most vehicles and the resources of people who receive WFFA or SSI.

How do I apply for Food and Nutrition Services?

If you think you might be eligible for FNS benefits and want to apply, you need to:

- Go online to <https://epass.nc.gov> to apply for FNS benefits.
- Call or go to the local agency for an application or ask them to mail you an application.
- Fill out the application as much as you can. If you can’t fill out the whole application, please put your name and street address on the form and sign it. If you need help filling out the application, please let someone at your local agency know.
- Return the application to the local agency by mail, fax, in person or by an authorized representative. An authorized representative is someone you know and trust to help you. The sooner your local agency gets your application, the sooner you will know if you are able to get benefits.
- Have an interview. You can do your interview over the phone, in person, or you can have

someone you know, and trust go to the interview in your place.

- You may have to show the local agency important papers such as pay stubs, receipts for rent or mortgage payments, utility bills, child or elder care bills, child support court orders or cancelled checks. A caseworker will tell you what you need.

•After reviewing your application, you will be informed if you qualify and how much you will receive.

If I am eligible, how much can I get?

Look at the table below to see the most you can get if you have no income. As your income goes up, your FNS benefits go down. The amounts in this table may change each October. To see if they have changed, call EBT Call Center 1-888-622-7328.

People in Household	Maximum Monthly Allotment
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1	\$194
2	\$355
3	\$509
4	\$646
5	\$768
6	\$921
7	\$1,018

Do I need a Social Security number?

Family members who do not have a social security number will not be able to get FNS benefits. FNS benefits are only for family members with a valid social security number. People in the household who do not want FNS benefits do not have to give their Social Security number, but they may have to give their income information.

Can I get Food and Nutrition Services if I am not working?

Yes. If your household meets the income limits, you may be able to get FNS benefits.

Can legal non-citizens get Food and Nutrition Services benefits?

Each member of the FNS household must be a U. S. Citizen or an immigrant admitted to the United States under a specific immigration status. Citizens and eligible immigrants must also meet all other FNS eligibility requirements to receive assistance.

You can choose not to apply for yourself or members of your household and are not required to answer questions about Social Security Numbers (SSNs) and citizenship/immigration information for those you choose not to apply for. For each individual that you are applying for you must provide information about SSNs and citizenship/immigration status. Providing a SSN is required by the Food and Nutrition Act for applicants seeking benefits. We will not share SSNs with INS. We will only use the SSNs you give us to do computer matches and check what you told us with State and Federal Agencies. You must be a United States (U.S.) citizen or an eligible alien and also meet other Food and Nutrition Services rules to get Food and Nutrition Services benefits. We will only contact USCIS to check the immigration status on the household members who give us their immigrant documents. If an applicant does not provide this information, they will be ineligible for benefits.

Household members must provide their financial information because it is needed to determine eligibility for individuals who are applying. Eligible household members who apply will be able to get benefits even though some people in the household are not applying for benefits. The amount of benefits will depend on the number of people requesting benefits.

How does Food and Nutrition Services help me eat healthier?

FNS helps stretch your dollars at the grocery store so you and your family can eat a variety of healthy food, such as grains (especially whole grains), fruits and vegetables and drink fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk every day. Good foods can help you, and your family, stay healthy.

How can I get more information?

Please call your local agency for any questions or complaints you may have regarding FNS benefits.

Call EBT Call Center 1-888-622-7328 for all EBT card inquiries.

If you need an interpreter when you apply, one will be provided for you.

STATE COMPLAINT SYSTEM

Complaints about Food and Nutrition Services which do not fall into another category are handled by the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services. If, for example, you have a complaint concerning a delay in processing your case or if you have a complaint about the service you received at the county Food and Nutrition Services office, call the DHHS Customer Support Center toll free at 1-800-662-7030 or 877-452-2514 (TTY Dedicated) or send your complaint to:

Carlotta Dixon, MHS, CPM
Section Chief
State Emergency Response Team (SERT)/ESF 6 Human Services Lead
Title VI/ADA-Civil Rights Coordinator
NC Division of Social Services-Program Compliance
North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
820 South Boylan Avenue, McBryde Building
2401 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, N.C. 27603

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State of North Carolina • Roy Cooper, Governor
Department of Health and Human Services
Mandy Cohen, MD, MPH, Secretary
www.ncdhhs.gov

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Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) Fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) Email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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